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Some Reminiscences OF Noted Men and Times

Paper Read Before the
Lebanon County Historical Society
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SOME REMINISCENCES OF NOTED MEN AND TIMES

BY H. M. M. RICHARDS, LITT.D.

PROVIDENCE has decreed that, during the brief span of my life, events of momentous national and world-wide importance shall have chased each other over the pages of history, in which men have become renowned, many of whose names are now household words.

And, by chance or otherwise, it has happened that, more or less intimately and actively, I have been associated with some of these men and identified with some of these events.

History has recorded these events and spoken of these men in its own way, but I have felt that it might be of interest, and would not be extraneous to the purpose for which the Lebanon County Historical Society came into existence, were one of its members to place on record his personal experience with a few of these occurrences and with some of the men prominent in them.

My military experience began in 1863, when, a lad of fourteen, I became a member of Company A, composed largely of students from the Lutheran College and Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and a part of the 26th Emergency Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. It was not my fortune, at that time, to be thrown in contact with any of the leaders of our Union Army, but I was providentially spared from making an intimate acquaintance with some of the Confederate officers and the inside of a rebel prison when, in disguise, I found myself within the enemy's lines where I gained valuable information for our authorities as to their movements. While such was the case, however, one of the most momentous events of my life then took place when occurred the little known historical fact that my regiment, by its own sacrifice, was instrumental in delaying the advance of Lee's army for one whole

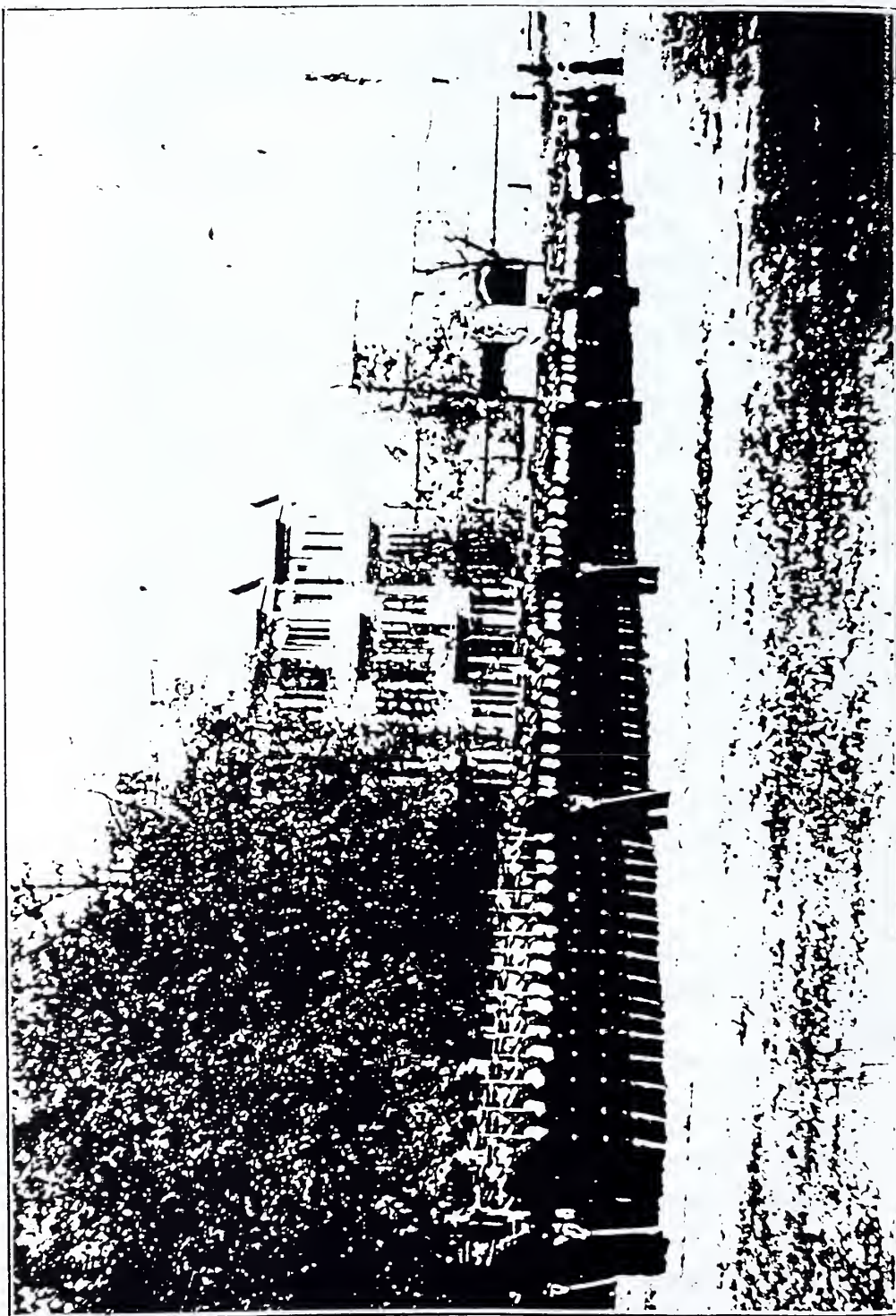
day which necessitated his fighting the battle of Gettysburg, saved Harrisburg from capture and the nation from disintegration.

With the defeat of the Confederate troops at Gettysburg we were amongst those ordered in pursuit of them. We were encamped one evening, within sound of their guns, when a carriage drove up, around which we all gathered in large numbers, and from which came a tall, rather lanky, man, who climbed up on one of its wheels and made us a speech of cheer and congratulation. It was Andrew G. Curtin, the War Governor of our Commonwealth, who never failed to look out for the welfare and interests of his soldiers, and was correspondingly endeared to them.

On July 9, 1864, some 20,000 Confederates, under Early, defeated 6,000 Union troops, under General Lew. Wallace, at Monocacy Junction, near Frederick, Md., who gallantly essayed to hold them until reinforcements might reach the garrison at Washington, and the nation's capital thereby saved from capture. It was saved and the rebels forced to retreat, as we know. In the course of these operations my then regiment, the 195th Pennsylvania Volunteers, found itself on the battlefield which was still strewn with unburied carcasses of dead animals, shattered arms, and parts of clothing of those who had lost their lives in the conflict. Amidst these harrowing scenes we went into camp.

One day, as we were dismissed from regimental drill in the afternoon, word was passed around that the newly appointed commander-in-chief of all the armies, General U. S. Grant, was present. Many of us flocked to the house occupied by our commander as his headquarters, and lined the fence surrounding it while we stared at a man, dressed in unpretentious fatigue uniform, and unattended even by an orderly, without "fuss or feathers," who sat upon a chair quietly smoking a cigar.

This was he who was destined to accomplish such great deeds and to attain international renown. It was here, and at



this time, he planned the operations in the Shenandoah Valley which were so brilliantly carried out by Sheridan, and which resulted in the final overthrow of the opposing troops under General Early. Almost immediately after his arrival our forces were started on their way to the Valley, my regiment being detached to guard the flanks of the army from the attacks of the bushwhackers in the mountains and from Moseby's guerrillas.

During my succeeding service, as a midshipman at the U. S. Naval Academy, I had as a classmate a young man named O. P. Howe. He had been a drummer in Sherman's army, and had greatly distinguished himself in battle on an occasion when his regiment had run out of ammunition. To secure a new supply it was necessary to run the gauntlet of a hot fire from the enemy, so hot that many gallant men hesitated to face it. He volunteered to perform the deed, was successful in the attempt, but at the moment of success fell pierced by some six balls.

Sherman saw the deed and rewarded the hero by obtaining for him an appointment to the Naval Academy. He never forgot the act, and his innate kindness of heart was evidenced by the fact that, upon several occasions, accompanied by Generals Grant and Sheridan, while paying visits to his old friend and companion-in-arms, Admiral Porter, the Superintendent, he invariably hunted up Howe to inquire into his welfare. As Howe was an especial friend of mine, at all these times I came into close contact with these three distinguished officers.

My last personal connection with General Grant was when I graduated in 1869. I had been at the head of my class practically every year and graduated as a "star," or honor man. The battalion of midshipmen was drawn up in line, and I was paraded in front of it close to Grant, who stood beside Admiral Porter. The Admiral made an address eulogizing me, after which the General handed my diploma to me, looking me over from head to foot in the meantime. I have felt that the honor thus conferred upon me by these two great men was

seldom accorded anyone. In addition, I have taken pride in the fact that my several commissions as a United States naval officer all bear the signature of U. S. Grant, President of the United States.

At the close of the year 1864 I received my honorable discharge from the army preparatory to my entering the United States Naval Academy at the commencement of its coming academic year.

On April 9, 1865, General Lee surrendered the remnant of his army, and the whole nation made preparations to celebrate this great event and to rejoice over the coming of peace.

With a happy heart I retired to bed a few nights later, when, quite early the next morning, I was awakened by a loud knocking at my room door. Hastily springing up, I heard my sister crying outside and learned of the assassination of our beloved President, Abraham Lincoln. No one, save he were living at the time, can realize the thrill of horror and wrath, and the sorrow, which, like a terrible wave, spread over the entire North. When his body lay in state, in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, I was one of the great crowd who was privileged to pass his bier and gaze upon his countenance, and who, later, stood uncovered as his funeral cortege passed by through the streets of that city. It was the only time I saw Mr. Lincoln.

Some five years later, either in the two last months of 1869 or the first month of 1870, I cannot say positively, while a midshipman on the U. S. S. *Juniata*, then at Marseilles, France, our captain brought down to our mess and introduced to us a young man, more boyish in appearance and manners than actually in age, who turned out to be Tad (Thomas) Lincoln, born April 4, 1852, especially beloved by his father and the favorite of every one about the White House. He was then living in Europe with his widowed mother. It is needless to say that we at once "took to him" and made his visit as pleasant as possible. Like midshipmen, however, we could not refrain from teasing him and spinning all kinds of im-

probable "sailor yarns" to him, which, to our great amusement, he never failed to believe.

In July, 1870, having secured leave of absence for the purpose, I happened to be at Mayence on my way to the German army. Passing along the street in uniform I was hailed by someone calling me by name. As I turned around in my surprise I saw Tad Lincoln, who was overjoyed to meet a friend from his own country. He insisted upon my going with him to see his mother, and was greatly disappointed when I felt obliged to decline, fearing I would not have time to do so. I have never hesitated to regret this refusal on my part. As he died but a brief time after this event, when eighteen years of age, it is more than probable that I was the last of his friends from the homeland privileged to see him and grasp his hand.

This was just prior to the battles of Worth and Gravelotte, which began the great Franco-German War of 1870-71, when, fortunately, I was given an opportunity to witness the massing of the German troops. From that moment I realized the strength of Germany's great military system, which has developed, at the present time, into one of the most perfect and terrible machines in the history of the world.

At the outbreak of the Civil War it became necessary to remove the Naval Academy from its home in southern Maryland to the safer locality of Newport, R. I. Here I entered the naval service, one of the last to join at that place before its return to Annapolis during the summer of 1865. When I reached there the old quarters were undergoing renovation after having been used as a hospital largely for Union soldiers returned from rebel prisons. Frequently transports would even then arrive with troops from the South on their way to be mustered out.

For a time I was quartered on the U. S. Frigate *Santee*, and then ordered to the U. S. Frigate *Constitution*, the famous "Old Ironsides" of the past, still preserved as a relic and curiosity in the Boston Navy Yard. After my transfer from the *Constitution* she was no longer in active service, so that I

have had the distinction of being among the very last officers to be actually on duty on that grand old vessel.

During the four years of my attachment to the Naval Academy as a midshipman I was thrown into association with many famous naval officers. The war had barely ended, or was about to end, and of all those who had distinguished themselves during its existence certain of the most able and prominent were selected for duty at the Academy. Amongst this "constellation of stars" was included such men as Porter, Luce, Dewey, Sampson, Schley, R. W. Meade.

The great services of Admiral David D. Porter to his country are so well known that it is not necessary even to make reference to them. It is because of that fact, however, I have felt it to be a greater honor to have had his personal friendship.

He was appointed Superintendent of the Naval Academy in 1865, the year my class entered, and remained as such until 1869, when we graduated. It was his great ability which laid the foundation, during that time, upon which the magnificent structure of this renowned institution has since been reared. He was never feared by those under him, but so loved and respected that no one would have dreamed of transgressing the rules which he laid down. As an example of the kind of discipline with which he governed us, I recall the time when, in spite of marine guards and other watchmen, many of us youngsters who desired liberty would scale the walls surrounding the grounds at night time, and escape into the town. When he found that these escapades were becoming numerous instead of attempting to visit condign punishment upon the guilty offenders he published an order, before the entire battalion on parade, to the effect that, thereafter, no attempt would be made to stop any midshipman who might be seen leaving the grounds, but, as we were presumed to be gentlemen, as well as officers, he placed every one on his honor not to go out unless with proper permission. That ended the wall jumping.

As in our class was his son, Theodoric, that was an added

reason why he looked upon us, in especial, as his own "boys," and treated us accordingly. The personal acts of kindness shown us by the Admiral and his charming and lovable wife, during the four years we were with them, are too numerous for mention.

During the year 1872 I chanced to be on duty at the U. S. Torpedo Station, Newport, R. I., while the Admiral and Mrs. Porter were residing in that fashionable city. Our acquaintance was then resumed, and, as usual, Mrs. Porter, in especial, was pleased to show a friendly courtesy to Mrs. Richards.

At the Fiftieth Anniversary gathering of my class, in 1915 at the Army and Navy Club, Washington, D. C., Commodore Theodoric F. Porter, his son and one of us, was present, and, in the midst of a running fire of wit, jokes and stories, I got off one at his expense to the amusement of the listeners.

In the chapel of the U. S. Naval Academy there may be seen today a very handsome memorial window, from the workshop of Tiffany & Co., New York City, presented by the class of 1865-69 to perpetuate their regard and affection for their friend and mentor, Admiral David Dixon Porter.

After an absence of nearly three years, cruising in the Mediterranean and along the coasts of Europe and Africa, I was given a few weeks at home, of which I took advantage to get married, and was then ordered to report for duty at the Torpedo Station, Newport, R. I., which has since developed into a great Naval War College. At that time the use of torpedoes was in its infancy and all the great powers of the world were not only seeking to develop these terrible engines of war, but were also attempting to learn all the secret devices and inventions of their neighbors.

The Government deemed it advisable to send to this station, at stated periods, officers especially selected, not only for instruction but for the consideration and solution of intricate problems. In the course of these studies many experiments were tried and many problems given out. The greatest of all the problems confronting all the nations at this time was to develop an earth connection, circuit closing, contact fuze which would explode the torpedo with the use of but one wire.

Such a solution each one of us, on one occasion, was required to present the next day. While puzzling over the matter, the answer seemed to flash into my mind. I quickly drew the diagram on my paper and went into the class room in a particularly happy frame of mind. Upon arrival we were all somewhat surprised to find there a foreign officer, either French or German, I cannot now recall, to whom the courtesy of the station was being extended.

Several officers were called up and placed their diagrams on the blackboard, which were discussed pro and con by the class. Then I was called upon, but had barely time to say a word about what I had drawn when the instructing officer remarked, "Very well, Mr. Richards, rub it off the board and take your seat!" I did, as directed, with considerable dismay and disappointment, but my feelings were rapidly turned into joy when, soon after, my design was tried and proved to be the solution of what the whole world was seeking. The episode in the class-room was merely intended for a blind to our visitor. The result of my effort was that I was retained at the station as instructor for the succeeding term, and my invention was promptly adopted by the Government. In the light of present-day devices and occurrences I have frequently smiled when thinking of the crude beginning made forty-five years ago.

Rear Admiral Richard Worsam Meade, one of those with whom I was associated at the Academy, was the brother of General George Gordon Meade, commanding the Army of the Potomac, and the man who gained the battle of Gettysburg.

Any old soldier who ever knew General Meade will recall that he was of a decidedly peppery nature. He had a temper of his own. So did his brother, Admiral Meade. Yet I feel sure I am not wrong in saying that all his soldiers liked and respected General Meade, and I know that such was the case with all who served under the Admiral. General Meade has not been given sufficient credit for his great ability, and, while all in the service knew what a splendid officer was his brother,

it is probable that he, likewise, was not given such credit, in general, as he deserved.

Those were the days of sailing vessels and, for the several years I was with him at the Academy, he had charge of the Department of Seamanship. Splendid sailor as he was, I can recall, as an instance of his character and pertinacity, how he insisted upon trying to work our vessel, under canvass, out of a small bay in which we had become becalmed, notwithstanding the orders which were signalled him to anchor and furl sail.

It was he who, while in command of the U. S. S. *Narragansett* in the Pacific Ocean, succeeded in securing by treaty from the chiefs of the Samoan, or Navigator, Group, in 1872, the splendid harbor of Pango-Pango, on the southern side of the island of Tutuila, the best in the entire Pacific. On April 4, 1873, Captain George Dewey relieved him at Panama of his command, and, on that same day, I stepped on board the *Narragansett*, bade farewell to Meade and became one of Dewey's officers.

Every school child is familiar with the thrilling story of how, on the night of October 27, 1864, Lieutenant William Barker Cushing, with his little steam launch and daring crew, forced his way over the chain of logs surrounding the Confederate iron-clad ram *Albemarle*, at Plymouth, North Carolina, and sank her with a torpedo.

Very few indeed know that the little boat which was used for the purpose and, later, recovered by the Union forces, was sent to Annapolis as a relic of the occasion. One day (about 1867 or 1868, I do not have the exact time); while in the bath-house, I heard a terrific explosion, rushed to the window and was just in time to see a cloud of vapor and smoke in the river where the launch had gone with a party of officers and its crew for some purpose. It is not known what caused the accident. Many were killed or drowned, and I was present when the living, who had been rescued, were brought ashore suffering untold agony. The boat, which had been sunk in its attack on the *Albemarle*, had again gone to a watery grave.

To the general reading public, more familiar with things on land than with the happenings of the great deep, the name

of Rear Admiral Stephen Bleecker Luce is probably not so well known, and yet Admiral Luce, who died at Newport, R. I., so recently as July 28, 1917, left this world full of years (94) and honors. One, himself of great distinction, has said: "Of all the great names borne upon the rolls of our naval history, none deserves a higher place than that of Stephen B. Luce."

At a time when seamanship was the leading study for young naval officers his work on "Seamanship" was the universal text-book.

"As boy and man he was handsome of feature, finely formed, of graceful carriage, with a mind singularly alert and penetrating, a gift of humor which always found something to make bearable the worst situation, a habit of command that insured prompt and willing obedience; at a time when it was the duty of all naval officers to be seamen, there was no finer seaman than he."

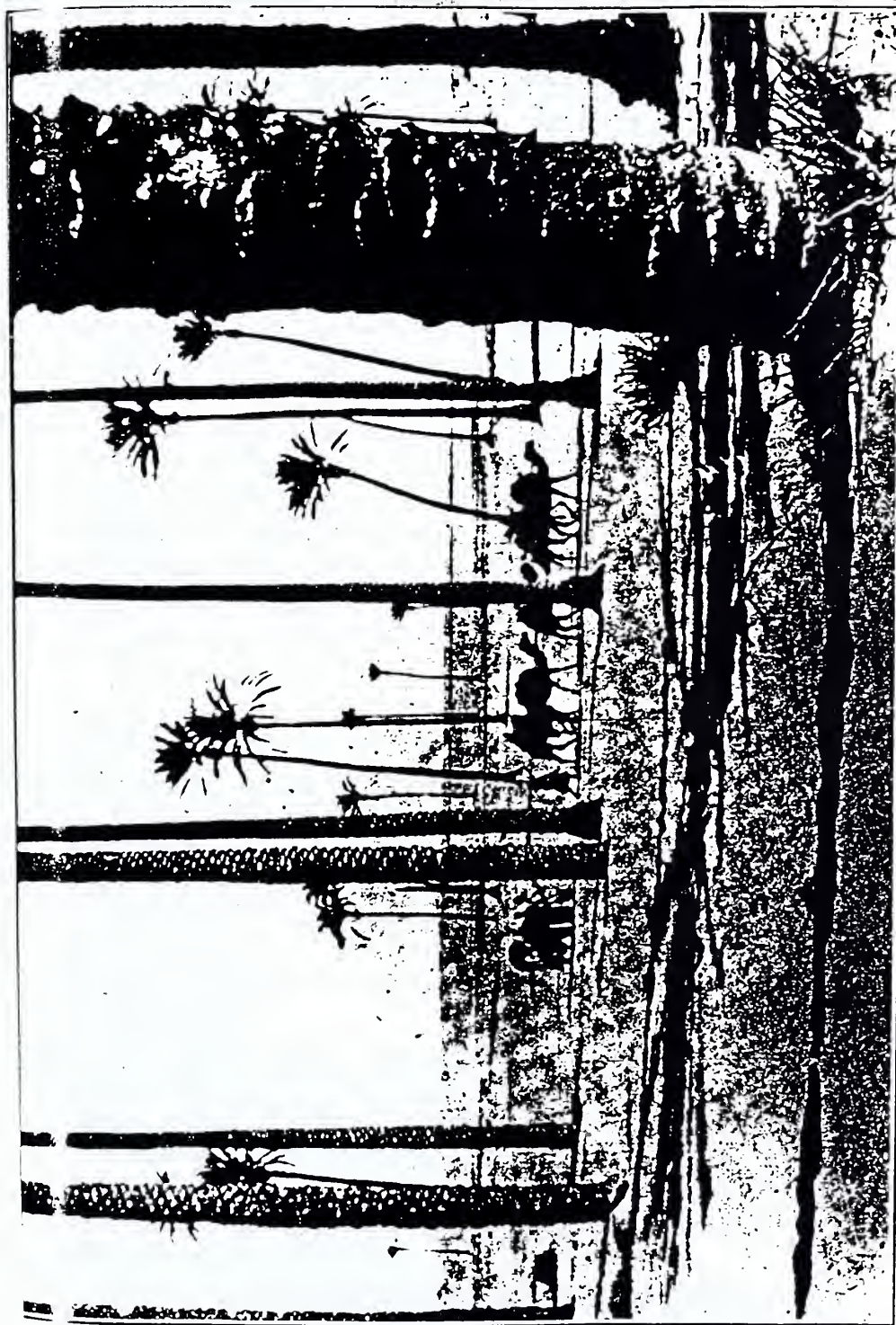
He originated the Naval Apprentice system, and was the father of our now great Naval War College.

So honorable was his service during the Civil War that, at its close, Admiral Porter, when appointed Superintendent of the Naval Academy, selected, as his Commandant of Midshipmen, Luce from the many distinguished men who had served under him.

It was with this splendid officer I was associated for nearly seven years. To him, largely, I owe my naval training, of which I have never had occasion to be ashamed, and today, amongst my many like treasures including a similar one from Admiral Dewey, is a copy of his letter of high commendation to the Navy Department, given when, finally, in 1871, I was transferred from his command to the flagship *Franklin*.

He had been my commandant for some four years at Annapolis. Upon my graduation, in 1869, I requested to be assigned to the U. S. S. *Juniata*, of which he had just been given command, and which was then fitting out at Philadelphia for the European station.

It need hardly be said that, under such a commander, our vessel soon became the "crack" ship of the station where every



THE TRAGIC COAST OF NORTHERN AFRICA

ship considered itself to be unsurpassed. Never was there a finer man-of-war, better manned, better drilled or in better shape generally. Because of this fact we were selected for all duties of the most important character, which resulted in my being actively identified with the momentous events occurring in Europe during the years 1870-71.

Before crossing the ocean we had a short spell of duty at New York, from August 6 to 18, 1869, watching certain vessels presumed to be loading with arms and supplies for the Cubans, who, even then, were trying to shake off the Spanish yoke.

July 14, 1870, found us at Dover, England, where we presently saw, steaming into the harbor, four large German iron-clads. Barely coming to anchor a boat was sent on shore, evidently for information, and, upon its return, the squadron left at once. War was declared between France and Germany five days later, and it is most likely that we were of the very first to have an inkling of the fact thus in advance.

Very promptly the French fleet made its way to Heligoland, then in possession of the English, where its commander was in position to "coop up" the German vessels at Wilhelmshaven, then, as now, their great rendezvous and base of operations.

In anticipation of a conflict and in hopes of seeing the first great battle between modern iron-clads, on August 27, 1870, we left Flushing, Holland, and, on the early morning of August 29th, came in sight of the French fleet, by whom we were soon discovered. They immediately detached two of their vessels to intercept us, which approached so as to command us on both sides.

Here Captain Luce's sense of humor came into play. Without hoisting our flag to denote our nationality he ordered the drums to beat to quarters. We flew to our guns, cast them loose and got ready for action. Just as the puzzled Frenchmen were about to open fire on us up went the stars and stripes and, of course, that ended the drama, and we soon came to anchor close to the fleet.

We were given to understand that, at any moment, the Germans were expected to come out and take issue with their

enemy. Just at the critical instant when we had reason to believe this would occur a fearful hurricane struck us. While some several small vessels went to pieces on the rocks, we managed to hold on with three anchors and all our masts down, and with your humble servant on watch in the engine room ready to open wide the throttle to a full head of steam should anything carry away, but the French fleet was dispersed in every direction never to come back again, as the rapid advance of the German army made all blockading impossible as well as unnecessary. It was a great disappointment to us.

Remaining at Heligoland until September 12th, we then went to Delfzyl, Holland, and from there made our way to Wilhelmshaven, where we were taken in charge by the German naval pilots, who saw us safely through the maze of submarine defences which guarded the entrance, until we anchored in the midst of the German fleet, with which we remained a while, hoping against hope that we might be privileged to see the expected naval engagement.

While the sea-fight did not materialize, yet it was my good fortune, in this way, to view, at close range, the naval operations of the Franco-German war, insignificant though they chanced to be.

From September 24th to November 26, 1870, we lay at Havre, France, to protect American interests in anticipation of raids by Prussian Uhlans who had advanced in close proximity to that city.

The main French army having been surrendered at Sedan, on September 2, 1870, it became practically impossible for the government to organize, equip and arm, with sufficient rapidity, a disciplined force great enough to oppose the quick German advance. Although they struggled heroically to that end, and fought with the utmost bravery, their several armies became gradually hemmed in. Then General Bourbaki made a valiant effort to break through the opposing lines, but was badly defeated, on January 15 and 16, 1871, and driven across the frontier into Switzerland, where his soldiers were disarmed and interned.

About this time I was again fortunate in securing permission to go to the scene of operations and succeeded in joining Bourbaki's defeated troops. I had an excellent opportunity to see with what kindness and consideration these men were treated by the Swiss, who extended to them all possible courtesy and liberty.

Just as we are having similar experiences in the present great conflict, so, in the wake of the Franco-German War came the Communistic Outbreak of 1871 in France. While I was not privileged to witness the scenes of terror so prevalent in Paris, yet, when the troubles had extended to Marseilles by March and April, when rioting became acute and the Hotel de Ville had been attacked and captured, our ship put in its appearance at this new point of violence and aided in bringing about peace and quiet.

During the continuance of this unhappy war it was my lot to experiment in the use of horse meat as a food. I have eaten many worse things.

The whole of Europe seemed to be in a turmoil throughout the years 1870 and 1871.

The Pope was deprived of all temporal power by the king of Italy, and Rome occupied by the Italian troops. Again we were called into service and lay at Naples also Civita Vecchia, Italy, during much of February and March, 1871, ready at any moment to afford armed protection if needed.

Don Carlos, of Spain, taking advantage of the troubles of his neighbors, started an insurrection to gain back the throne of his ancestors. This came near being my undoing. The country was full of brigands, robbing and murdering those with whom they came in contact. With a small party of officers I started out, on horseback, in May, 1870, for the town of San Roque, on a reconnoitering trip. All went well until on our return when, having fallen slightly behind the others, as I was passing through a cork woods a party of bandits sprang out upon me. It was evidently their purpose to capture me alive and hold me for ransom, as had been done just previously in another instance, because, instead of using their guns, which would have given an alarm and brought assist-

ance from my comrades, they struck at me with heavy clubs. Whilst dodging their blows I kept tugging at my revolver. Most of their clubs hit my horse, one of them on the head with such violence as to stagger the animal, when I thought my time had come. I had just succeeded in freeing my revolver, was aiming at the nearest ruffian and about to pull the trigger, when a sudden blow on the haunch of my horse caused him to leap forward through my opposing assailants and start on a run. I turned around to give a parting shot, but, seeing that I was free, could not bring myself to do what I felt would be deliberate murder, and so kept on my way and speedily rejoined my companions.

As the insurrection kept spreading we were ordered to Cadiz, to provide for any possible contingencies, and remained there much of December, 1870, and January, 1871. While here it was decided to establish a signal station at the house of the United States consul, from which to keep up communication with the ship in case of attack. I was selected for that cheerful, albeit dangerous, duty, and sent on shore in accordance therewith.

I also took a journey to Madrid, luckily without mishap, during which it was my fortune to see the weird spectacle of an eclipse of the sun, which was there and then total about the middle of the day.

As if to break me in and get me accustomed to all the war-like events with which I was later identified, in the early Spring of 1870 some Mohammedan fanatics in Tunis, Africa, saw fit to run "amuck," incidental to which was the slaughter of various Christian giaours. We were hurried there in April to put an end to this innocent amusement of "the faithful," and to demand an apology. I was one of the officers who accompanied our commander on his visit to the ruling Bey, who was surrounded by the historic eunuchs, and who received us with all courtesy and profuse apologies, promising to decapitate the offenders. Having backed out of his presence, one of his officials showed us the sights of the city, the arsenal, forts and everything except the harem. It was the Tunis of old, not that of today under French rule, and it is to be re-

gretted that the character of this paper will not allow of any description of what was then seen.

Upon our return to the vessel a Turkish naval officer paid a visit of courtesy and was entertained by Captain Luce, who could not avoid an exhibition of his humor. When our Turkish friend came out of the cabin he had evidently partaken of the forbidden juice of the grape, and as he walked unsteadily towards his boat our captain winked at us as he bade him farewell.

It was here I came near losing my life when caught in a violent tempest while in an open boat with a drunken crew. I was providentially preserved, but it was one of the several times when I literally stared death in the face for many long minutes.

During the occurrence of all these events, which had so much to do with the world's history, and my participation in them, slight as it was, I served as an officer on the U. S. S. *Juniata*, under Captain Luce.

I had the pleasure of again greeting him, briefly, while busy making nitro-glycerine at the Torpedo Station, one day in 1872, when he was visiting that place.

In 1873, when the Spaniards had massacred the crew of the *Virginius*, a vessel engaged in supplying the Cubans with arms and material, it came near precipitating a war between Spain and our country. The United States gathered together a considerable fleet, the command of which was given to my old commander, by that time Rear Admiral Luce, who was kind enough to write me that he would like to have me assigned to his flagship, the U. S. S. *Monongahela*. The war did not occur, however, so I remained in the Pacific Ocean where I then was.

Of all the distinguished men under whom I served, the one nearest and dearest to me was Admiral George Dewey, who, so far as I was concerned, was more like an older brother than a mere superior officer.

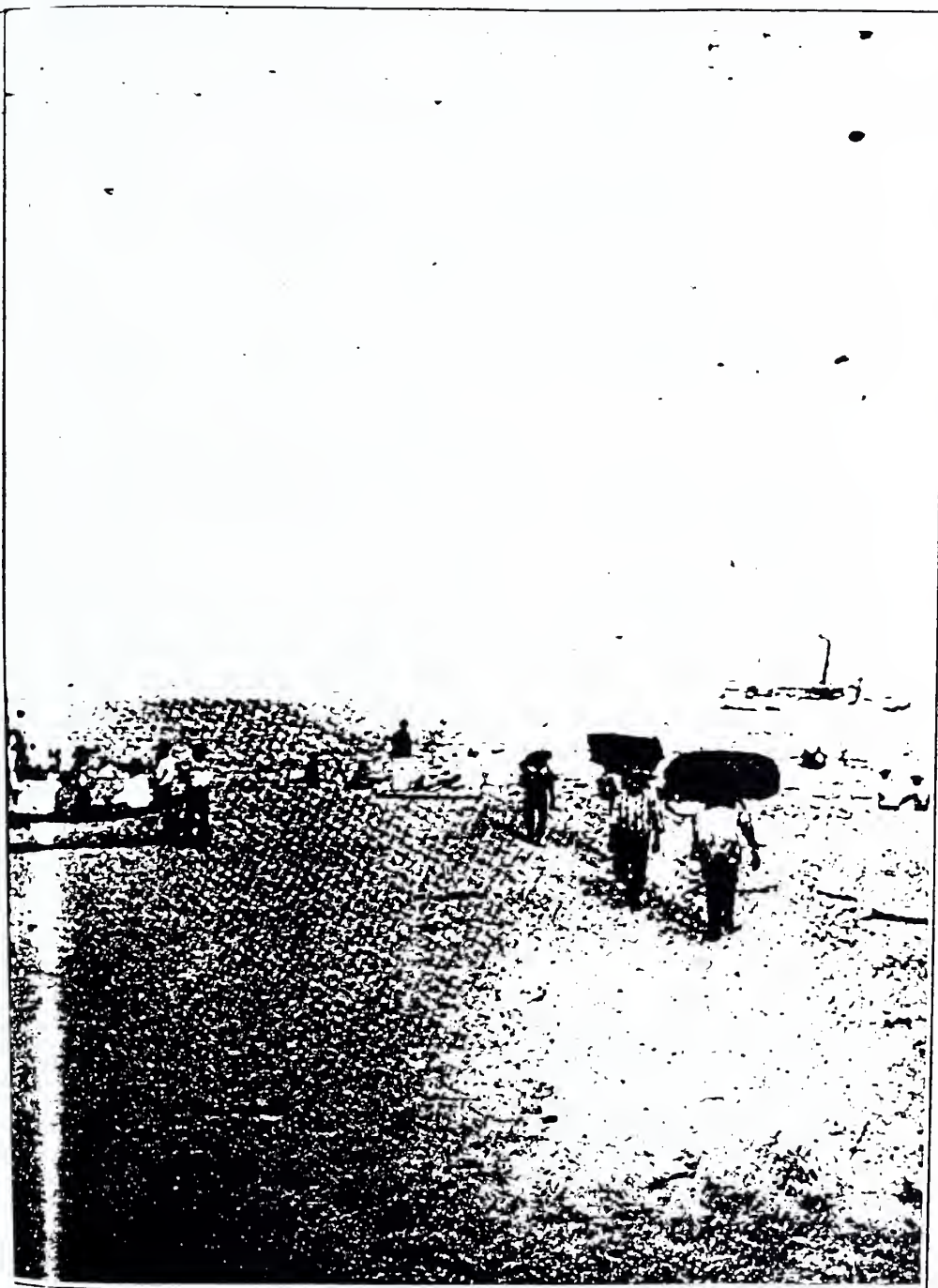
The picture of him, with which we are most familiar, represents a man born to command, of fine appearance, neat to punctiliousness in his person and attire, with grey hair and

handsome white moustache. Such he ever was, save that when I knew him the hair and moustache were black as night. To any one noting the black hair and piercing eye, it was apparent at once that there stood before him a person with whom no one would dare trifle. Although his many splendid qualities could not fail to endear him to those with whom he came in contact, yet a more extended acquaintance soon evidenced a temper, fortunately kept well under control. It was like the internal fire of a volcano. He had no use for an inefficient or second-rate subordinate, and when he began pacing the deck, nervously tugging at his moustache, woe betide the unfortunate culprit, or "slacker," who crossed his path. The man or officer who did not understand, or perform, his duty properly, and who did not care to jump overboard to drown himself, was doomed.

I do not wish to be understood as drawing a gloomy or exaggerated picture of this great man, but merely to bring out the fact that he was not only a splendid officer but a very strict disciplinarian in addition. To those who met with his approval there could have been no happier ship on which to serve. Had I remained in the service I could have asked nothing better than to have been attached to him during my entire career, and I trust I am not speaking egotistically when I add that I believe he would have been equally pleased to so have me.

From 1867 until my graduation in 1869 I was with him at the Naval Academy, but, naturally, was not there thrown into much personal contact with him.

In 1872, after my return from Europe, on the flagship *Franklin* (sold to a junk dealer and destroyed by fire October 2, 1916, at one time the finest vessel in our navy), I was ordered to duty at the Torpedo Station, Newport, R. I., where I found Captain Dewey and his charming wife (his first marriage), who was a Miss Susan B. Goodwin, a daughter of the Civil War Governor of New Hampshire. Beginning with the usual exchange of courteous visits there developed, in time, quite an intimate friendship between them and myself and Mrs. Richards. The two couples were drawn more closely



THE BEACH AT SAN JOSE DEL CABO, LOWER CALIFORNIA

together because, at the same period of time, there was born to each a son. The little ones lived and flourished, but it caused the death of Mrs. Dewey. The blow to Captain Dewey was so terrible that he asked to be ordered to sea, and was given command of the U. S. S. *Narragansett*, then cruising and surveying in the Pacific Ocean under Captain Richard W. Meade.

At his especial request I was assigned, March, 1873, to his vessel, and proceeded to Panama to await the arrival of our ship. Here we strolled together through the streets of old Panama, the Panama of nearly half a century ago and not the transformed Panama which, with my wife and daughter, I visited exactly forty years later, and here our mutual friendship ripened with the talks then held.

We had hardly become settled in our new quarters on board ship, the beginning of April, when a revolution broke out, and the air was filled with the din of battle. My impetuous nature has always been getting me into trouble. When I heard the firing I could not refrain from begging the captain to give me a chance should our services be needed. My offer was taken up immediately, and I was ordered ashore at once, with a squad of men, to protect the U. S. Consul. As I marched up the narrow streets I made the acquaintance of a choice assortment of rifle balls, but came out all right in the end, and have reason to believe that my offer and action did not belittle me in the eyes of my commander.

Shortly after there occurred an incident, of a personal nature, which, later, I regretted, but which is illustrative of Dewey's characteristics.

We had barely left Panama when we ran into a tropical thunderstorm. Blinding flashes of lightning made the water boil all around us, and the peals of thunder were simply terrific. The sky was full of dense black clouds which slowly came up and passed by. As these threatening clouds drew near all sail would be taken in, and reset when they had passed, entailing much work and loss of time, as we were most anxious to get away from the neighborhood.

I had been studying the situation very carefully and felt satisfied that there was no wind in the clouds, ugly as they looked,

and, therefore, no necessity to reduce sail. So, when my watch on deck came, I took charge of the ship, and found Captain Dewey at hand on the lookout. A particularly dark cloud put in its appearance and came towards us. Beside seeing that everything was ready I made no move to reduce sail. The captain's pace became more rapid and his hand began to twitch his moustache. He looked at me and then at the cloud which had almost reached us. Finally he blurted out: "Mr. Richards, do you see that cloud? Why, sir, do you not attend to your duty and take in sail?" I was still feeling blue at leaving home, and so, without stopping to consider, I replied: "I understand my duty, sir., There is no wind in the cloud, and it is not necessary to take in sail. If you do not like what I am doing, why did you ask to have me assigned to your ship? I did not ask to come." The landsman cannot understand what a heinous offence it was to make such a reply to a commanding officer. It was deserving of most condign punishment, even dismissal from the service. It was discourteous also, and I have never ceased to regret it. As a matter of fact by this time the cloud was overhead and had no wind in it, so I was right. Captain Dewey looked at me for a moment, turned on his heel and went into his cabin. I have often wondered whether, at heart, he did not like me better for my independence, especially as it was an evidence of my ability as a seaman.

I have already alluded to the fact that, in 1873, the United States came near engaging in war with Spain because of the massacre of the crew belonging to the *Virginus*. A fact, unknown at the time to his own officers, was brought to light years later when a document was found in the archives of the Navy Department, proving that Captain Dewey then made a request that the *Narragansett* be ordered to take possession of Manila, which he so gallantly captured in 1898. What an event would that have been to the writer of this, could he have participated in it!

For several years we were engaged in surveying the Gulf of California, the coasts of Lower California and Mexico, and various islands in the Pacific Ocean. The charts of these

places, now in use, were all our work, of which, under my commanding officer, I had almost complete charge.

We passed through many experiences and saw many strange things, visiting many little known places and peoples, amongst which, in especial, were the barbarous savages of Tiburon Island, and the Yaqui Indians. I was privileged to be instrumental in saving the vessel from shipwreck on La Roca Partida of the Revillagigedo Group of islands. Had this occurred there would never have been an Admiral Dewey, nor your humble servant, the President of this Society.

Dewey was not a man to carry his feelings, or regard for others, "on his sleeve." Had it not been for a happening on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1874, I might never have ascertained how sincere and deep was his affection for me.

A boat expedition to some distant island became necessary, which, because of the sudden night storms, called "temporals," then prevalent, was of such a dangerous character that the captain hesitated to order it. This fact he confided to me as we walked together on the deck one night, and even went so far as to intimate that he would like to have my opinion. I told him there was not anything else to be done and that the boat should be sent, at the same time volunteering to take charge of the venture myself.

He accepted my offer and we went. The storm came and we fought for our lives all night. Many difficulties and dangers had to be overcome, but the duty was properly performed, and, very early one morning on our return, when day broke we saw the good old *Narragansett* directly ahead of us, and were soon on board. I reported at once to the captain, who received me most affectionately, and who, I learned later, had not retired all of that night because of his anxiety for us.

Can any one wonder that I treasure the memory of Admiral George Dewey deep in my heart, as that of a beloved brother, or father.

We had many talks together, some of which, as may be supposed, pertained to our homes and families. During one of these he gave me, to copy, the poem of which his wife had been

so fond, and which I mailed to my own wife. It contains the beautiful verses, eight in all, of "Gradatim," by J. G. Howard (Timothy Titcomb), the first of which is here given, and embodies the thoughts of the remaining seven.

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round."

* * * * *

There remain two additional men of note with whom I was associated—Rear Admiral W. T. Sampson and Winfield Scott Schley.

It was more than a calamity that the lives of these two great and brave men should have been embittered by the thoughtless acts of well-meaning friends. It robbed the first of the honors which rightly belonged to him, came near depriving him of just credit for faithful performance of duty, and eventually caused his death. For the other it brought to light errors of judgment, to which all humanity is prone, and tended to blemish an otherwise grand record.

I served under Schley at the Naval Academy from 1866 to 1869. He was more or less slender in build and inclined to be nervous in temperament. After leaving the Academy he became attached to the U. S. S. *Benicia*, on the Asiatic Station, during which time, in 1871, a punitive attack was made on the Salée River forts in Korea. The fort was taken by storm, he being the second or third man over the rampart. It is impossible to question his bravery.

In 1884 he was placed in command of my old ship, the *Junia*, and sent up into the Arctic regions to rescue, if possible, the Greeley expedition. On June 22nd he succeeded in finding the miserable starving survivors at Cape Sabine, almost at the point of death, which would have claimed them a few hours later.

During the Spanish War, of 1898, I was with both him and Sampson around Cuba and Porto Rico.

He had the faculty of making friends, wherever he went, by his pleasant ways. The last I saw of him was when we cheered him in New York Harbor, at Tompkinsville, the man-of-war rendezvous, as he passed by our ship at anchor.

Sampson was the antithesis of Schley. Fine looking, but cold in manner and quiet of speech. Instead of attracting people to him he was apt to chill and repel. Withal he was a splendid officer and to him, unquestionably, belongs the credit of planning all operations, about Santiago especially, and of successfully carrying out these plans.

Previous to the Spanish War I was associated with him at the Naval Academy during 1867-68. I never liked him personally. Probably my dislike originated in a little incident which occurred in 1867.

I was attached to the U. S. S. *Savannah* as a midshipman, he being my superior officer. One day, while I was reading a paper-covered book, the call to quarters was unexpectedly sounded. I hurriedly stuffed the book in my blouse and took my station. Unfortunately, one end remained sticking out, which caught his eye as he came to inspect us. He angrily seized it, pulled it out and threw it on the deck. It was a trifle to be sure, but the manner in which it was done was so ungracious that it has lingered in my memory to this day.

It was during this cruise we anchored in the harbor of Cherbourg, France, in the midst of a great fleet of men-of-war, congregated in honor of the grand French International Exposition, then held in Paris, and the progenitor of many succeeding similar exhibits. We were fortunate to chance upon a time when the unfortunate Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III, paid all of us a visit. Every vessel was beautifully decorated, at day with a wealth of bunting and at night with innumerable electric lights. It was a grand sight, as all the yards were manned while she steamed around the many ships, in the Imperial Yacht, amidst the cheers of the sailors and cries of "Vive l'Imperatrice!" and "Vive Eugenie!" Few, then, could have imagined the days of sorrow which lay before her.

The men and events, of which I have written, are, even now, but shadows of the past. New men and new events are rapidly crowding them aside. That I will hardly be able to have reminiscences of these new things is not because I have made no effort to participate in them, but, to my great regret, because our Government, as yet, feels that my present age and past services entitle me to a well-earned rest rather than renewed activity.

H. M. M. RICHARDS.

